

ACVETEO - ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT,
TRAINING AND EMPLOYER OUTREACH

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

March 22, 2023

SUMMARY MINUTES

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND
EMPLOYER OUTREACH (ACVETEO)

Virtual Meeting

U.S. Department of Labor
Frances T. Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

PARTICIPANTS:

Gregory Green, ACVETEO, Designated Federal Officer
Lori Adams, Policy Director & NLx Senior Advisor, National
Association of Workforce Agencies
Keith Boring, U.S. Navy Credentialling Programs, Director
Bill Brigman, Solutions for Information Design
Ivan Denton, Director, Office of National Programs, DOL VETS
Laurel Devine, Director of Communications, DOL VETS
Gregory Kelly, Disabled American Veterans
Jason Kuroiwa, Japanes American Veterans Association
Carla Langham, Chief of Staff, DOL VETS
Kayla Lopez, Vigtory
Michael McDermott, President of Arcadia Group
Hughes McLean, Program Analyst, DOL
Melora McVicker, Education Services Officer, MCBQ
Carolyn Renick, Apprenticeship, Licensing, and Credentialing
Lead, DOL VETS
Kristopher Rick, Office of Strategic Outreach, Training, and
Partnership, DOL VETS
Mark Toal, Director, Office of Strategic Outreach, DOL VETS
Joe Wynn, National Association for Black Veterans (NABVETS)

The virtual meeting of the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment, Training, and Employer Outreach (ACVETEO) took place on March 22nd, 2023. **Carla Langham**, Chief of Staff, Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) opened the meeting explaining that it was still a virtual meeting due to Congress appropriating less money than expected for Federal Admin, she did mention though that the 2024 fiscal year budget included money to expand the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) to cover

military spouses as well and she explained their next steps regarding that. She also mentioned that the Bureau of Labor Statistics has a new report coming out in early April.

Gregory Green, ACVETEO, Designated Federal Officer, then took care of some administrative business before turning things over to **Bill Brigman**, Solutions for Information Design, who presented on the SkillBridge Program. He gave a quick history of the program and how it was developed and for what purpose, and then he spoke about how it grew into the program it is today with becoming a centralized system. He then spoke about the most recent National Defense Authorization Act and the impact that will have on the SkillBridge program, including impacting the name and various other refinements to the program. **Mr. Brigman** then spoke on the statistics of SkillBridge through the years, including the number of participants and the number of partner organizations. He followed that up with the pre-conceived notions of what SkillBridge is and what it actually is meant to do specifically as a skills training program to help develop additional skills for transitioning military members for civilian employment.

Mr. Brigman went more in depth on all the services that SkillBridge offers and the qualifications, process for application, and the application process. He also informed the board that about 90% of the time, the SkillBridge partners offer their trainees employment with the organization at the end of their SkillBridge training. He went into some further details on how they are making SkillBridge even more accessible and how they are looking to improve the program. He further explained how

SkillBridge works, emphasizing that the service members remain on active duty and that there are certain industries that cannot become participating businesses such as those in the marijuana or firefighting business. **Mr. Bigman** then took time to show the SkillBridge website, including the "Get Started Toolkit", explained how it gets used by the various users of the website, and spoke about its tie in with the different military branches similar programs.

Mr. Bigman spoke on what is expected from the training partners, including an orientation, and hand on training experience, and access to high level members of the company. They finish it with an outcome for completing the program, such as certificates or credentials. He then walked through other parts of the website including the application questionnaire, the Contact Us section, which he explained in depth, and the technical upkeep of the website including when it gets updated and how the IT system is improving. He finished by speaking on some changes expected in 2023 such as an enhanced content management system and a whole website revamp. He then opened up to questions. A few members thanked him for the presentation and all the work SkillBridge does for transitioning service members. There were some questions and discussion, including how virtual SkillBridge assignments work and steps for employment partners after their applications are accepted. Following some additional conversation, **Mr. Bigman** told the group how he and others with SkillBridge can be contacted.

Keith Boring, U.S. Navy Credentialing Programs, Director, then started a presentation on MilGears. He started by introducing himself and **Melora McVicker**,

Education Services Officer, MCBQ. He explained that they use the same information design teams as are used for SkillBridge to make the various programs run more efficiently. He added that MilGears is powered by Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL), and each service has a COOL program where they show service members, active duty, reserve, guard etc., what civilian certifications, licensure, apprenticeships, and academic degrees are best related to their military occupation or side skills. Once that is determined, MilGears gives them the means to earn those certifications etc. while in service and maintain them throughout their service, so they have civilian credentials employees are looking for once the transition.

Mr. Boring, went into further detail on what MilGears is. He explained that it is a publicly accessible website that supports members through the entire military life cycle. It can be utilized by a broad range of interested parties for various purposes, but the main part he is speaking on is how it is being used to recruit the best and brightest back into the military for fulltime employment. He went into detail on how MilGears accomplishes this and then gave a live tour of the website. He touched on a few of the tools on the site such as "Engage my Career", "Quick Explore", "Cyber Workforce", "Interest Profiler" and "Mil to Mariner". He then went further in depth on each tool and explained how they work, some unique features they provide, and what the goals are with each one. He added that MilGears is Authority to Operate (ATO'd) at an Impact Level (IL) 4 and 5, so they can hold PII-sensitive data, medical data, etc.

He then accessed the live site and walked the group through the process of using the website for different groups such as civilians looking to join the military, current service members, or transitioning veterans. He then ran through live each of the tools he had mentioned previously to show firsthand how they work. After his live presentation of the site, he spoke about how MilGears is expected to grow in the coming years including more tools, more growth, more utility for the user, the federal government, DoD, DOL VETS as a few of them. He finished by offering a point of contact for MilGears and then opened up for questions. After a few questions including one about how the Coast Guard is uniquely utilizing the program to bring civilian employees directly into the military in careers and pay levels that are equivalent to what they did beforehand. There was some additional comments and discussion, and then **Mr. Boring** concluded his presentation.

After a short break, **Carolyn Renick**, Apprenticeship, Licensing, and Credentialing Lead, DOL VETS, began a presentation on Registered Apprenticeships. She quickly introduced herself and explained her role within VETS and that they had recently done a presentation to the Innovative Veteran Training and Employment subcommittee on the same topic. She gave a quick overview stating they would use the time to explain what a registered apprenticeship is, talk about some of the data and statistics, go over the benefits for employers, career seekers, and educators, talk about the Office or Apprenticeship's initiatives to expand the program, where the funding is coming from, and the resources available for

those interested in more information.

Ms. Renick went into more detail on why Registered Apprenticeships are important and explained that they are in industry-driven training model where employers are developing the talent they are seeking and apprentices benefit from paid on-the-job experience and upon completion earn a DOL certified credential. She went more in depth on what makes Apprenticeships special and then turned the presentation over to **Hughes Mclean**, Program Analyst, DOL, who went into some of the statistics that illustrate the impact that apprenticeship has been having. He then spoke on the seven components of registered apprenticeship including it being industry led, it's a paid job, it offers on-the-job learning, it provides supplemental education, offers diversity and inclusion, they meet safety requirement, and it provides nationally recognized credentials from DOL. He went into more statistics before passing back to **Ms. Renick**.

She continued by speaking on some of the benefits of registered apprenticeships for the employers including the ability to find talent that may have otherwise been difficult, access to a network of expertise for information and funding, and the benefits for the veterans such as post-9/11 GI bill benefits to cover monthly housing allowance etc. while they complete their apprenticeship. After speaking more about the positive impact apprenticeships are having on employers and veterans alike, she handed the presentation back to **Mr. Mclean** who showed a visual illustration of the registered apprenticeship program. Using the visual, he went more in depth on how the

process works to build an apprenticeship program. He ran through the 5 major steps in the process and then showed the three different training approaches that provides flexibility for different employers. He ran through the three options including a time-based program, and competency based program, and a hybrid model approach. He then spoke about a couple of acts that were passed in support of Apprenticeship including the VALOR Act, the Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeship Act of 2019, the Apprenticeship Ambassador Initiative, and National Apprenticeship Week.

Ms. Renick, then spoke again more in depth on how the DOL partnered with The White House and other federal agencies to promote registered apprenticeship models as a way for employers to develop and grow the cybersecurity workforce. This included launching the 120-day Cybersecurity Apprenticeship Sprint, which VETS was involved with, and she went more in depth on how that developed and played out. She then went on to discuss specifically what VETS is doing to support apprenticeships including a number of initiatives such as updating the DOL TAP curriculum so veterans are aware of apprenticeships and their benefits, providing apprenticeship training for service members earlier in the military life-cycle, the VETS Apprenticeship Pilot, the Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) Registered Apprenticeship Pilot, the Employment Navigator and Partnership Pilot, the Task Force Movement, all of which she gave additional details on. She spoke then about plans for the future to improve the apprenticeship programs from website improvements, and connecting their platform with both SkillBridge and

MilGears, to expanding registered apprenticeships programs into the federal public sector agencies. She spoke briefly about what federal funding they have received and how it's been put to use, before letting everyone know some resources for more information on starting their own apprenticeship program. **Ms. Renick** and **Mr. Mclean** answered a few questions before completing their presentation.

After the last of the discussion, **Mr. Green** opened the meeting up for public comments, and after receiving none, he asked **Mark Toal**, Director, Office of Strategic Outreach, DOL VETS, to make a few comments. Once **Mr. Toal** was finished, **Mr. Green** adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.